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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3987
INFO RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 9264
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 3119
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RHMFISS/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA IMMEDIATE
RUAHYAF/5AF YOKOTA AB JA IMMEDIATE
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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 003734

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/05/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [NK](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: JAPAN PLANNING STRONG DIPLOMATIC RESPONSE TO NORTH
KOREAN MISSILE LAUNCHES

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer. Reason: 1.4 (b)(d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Japan is seeking early diplomatic action in response to the July 5 series of North Korean missile launches. Within hours of the first launch, the government convened a Cabinet national security meeting which agreed to seek immediate UNSC action and review options for additional sanctions on North Korea. Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe told the Ambassador on July 5 (Septel) that Japan wants to work closely with the United States ahead of UNSC discussions on North Korea's actions scheduled for 10:00 am (EST) July 5. Japan has requested a coordinated public statement ahead of the UNSC referral. On July 5, Japan also revoked the North Korean ferry Mangyongbong-92's permission to enter Japan just minutes before the ship was scheduled to arrive in Niigata. Additional sanctions are under consideration, but many measures on the table may require Diet action. In a series of press conferences, Abe, Foreign Minister Aso, and Defense Minister Nukaga lauded close U.S.-Japan cooperation following the North Korean missile launches. End Summary.

Quick Reaction

¶2. (C) Japan reacted quickly to the series of North Korean missile launches on July 5. Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe made a brief press statement at 6:15 am, within three hours of receiving reports of the first missile launch. The Ambassador was invited to a meeting with Abe, Foreign Minister Taro Aso, and Japan Defense Agency (JDA) Minister Fukushima Nukaga at 6:45 am to discuss developments (Septel) before cabinet members convened in a formal national security meeting at 7:00 am. Following the cabinet meeting, Abe held a second press conference, during which he warned of "stern actions" in response to the North Korean missile launches.

Immediate UNSC Action Sought

¶3. (C) Ministers attending the morning cabinet meeting endorsed a proposal to place the North Korean missile launch issue on the agenda of an informal UNSC meeting scheduled for 10:00 am (EST) on July 5. MOFA Asian Affairs DG Kenichiro Sasae told the DCM that Japan would like to coordinate closely with the United States on a UNSC referral before the meeting convenes in New York. MOFA officials confirmed that France, current UNSC Chair, has agreed to Japan's request to

place North Korea's missile activities on the July 5 UNSC agenda.

¶4. (C) The Japanese government also decided early morning July 5 to deny entry to the North Korean ferry Mangyongbong-92, which was scheduled to arrive in Niigata at 8:00 am the same day. MOFA Deputy Vice Minister Masaharu Kono told the DCM that Japan is reviewing options for additional sanctions, but Kono added that most options under consideration will require Diet approval.

Bilateral Coordination Lauded

¶5. (C) Foreign Minister Aso and JDA Minister Nukaga held separate press conferences later in the morning to update the media on developments and highlight the close ongoing cooperation between the United States and Japan (Note: data on the North Korean launches were coordinated in real time through the recently established Bilateral Joint Operations Coordination Center (BJOCC) at Yokota Air Base. End Note). The Japanese media also reported that the Secretary and FM Aso confirmed by telcon their commitment to a coordinated responses to North Korean actions.
SCHIEFFER